

## **TITLE IV-E CHILD WELFARE CAPPED ALLOCATION DEMONSTRATION PROJECT**

### **LOS ANGELES COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT**

On June 26, 2006, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors approved the Title IV-E Child Welfare Capped Allocation Demonstration Project (CADP), allowing the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation) to expand and implement their first sequence CADP strategies and fill necessary staff positions. Under this plan, effective July 1, 2007, the Departments began to implement critical system changes in the way child welfare services are provided to children and families in the County. These enhanced and expanded strategies targeted CADP reinvestment funds toward strategies that address improved safety, increased permanency and enhanced self-sufficiency.

#### **I. Goals:**

The goals outlined in the CADP are increased child safety, shorter timelines to permanency, increased placement stability and improved child and family well-being. Specifically, Probation has begun to achieve these goals by implementing strategies that:

- Provide more preventive services;
- Increase the number and array of services to allow more children to remain safely in their home;
- Reduce the reliance on out-of-home care through the provision of intensive, focused, individualized services;
- Reduce the number of children and their length of stay in congregate care while ensuring that individualized case planning and appropriate community alternatives are in place first; and
- Reduce the timelines to permanency.

#### **II. Initiatives:**

**Placement Assessment Centers (PAC)** - Probation has utilized Placement Assessment Centers throughout the Waiver. Newly placed youth are assigned to one of the PACs and spend 30-45 days receiving extensive educational, psycho-social, substance abuse and criminogenic risk assessments facilitated by licensed Clinical Social Workers. There are currently a total of 80 PAC beds - 70 male beds and 10 female beds.

**Expansion of Functional Family Therapy (FFT), Functional Family Probation (FFP) and Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST)** – In 2007, Probation implemented Functional Family Therapy (FFT), an evidence-based program focused on the functionality of the entire family. Probation partners with two community-based organizations to provide these services in SPAs 6, 7 and 8. Probation also hired and trained 15 DPOs in FFT in order to serve the remainder of Los Angeles County. Community-based providers have a capacity to serve approximately 125 youth and families, while the Probation FFT teams can serve approximately 90 youth and families.

Probation has also partnered with Star View Community Services to provide Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST) to approximately 25 youth and families at any given time. MST is another evidence-based intensive family- and community-based treatment program that focuses on addressing all environmental systems that impact chronic and violent juvenile offenders – their homes and families, schools and teachers, neighbourhoods and friends.

Probation implemented Functional Family Probation (FFP) in 2009, which is an intensive supervision model, utilizing the tenets of FFT. Prior to the start of the CADP, youth ordered Home on Probation visited their DPO once a month in a Probation area office. These DPOs typically carry upwards of 100 cases as opposed to the 20 cases that are carried by FFP DPOs who provide supervision in the home. FFP has the capacity to serve approximately 220 youth.

This strategic expansion of the FFP supervision model, FFT and MST has ensured that more youth leaving congregate care will be provided with strength-based, intensive supervision or treatment occurring in the home.

**Prospective Authorization and Utilization Review (PAUR) Unit** – Probation has established the PAUR unit to assist in matching youth and families with appropriate services. This unit improves consistency in service utilization, as referrals to services are pre-approved based on whether a youth and family meet the specified focus of service. The PAUR unit handles referrals for Family Preservation, FFT, FFP and MST and processes referrals for youth who are considered at-risk of entering out-of-home care. The PAUR unit also oversees referrals for those youth transitioning from Placement back to the community and ensures that these programs are operating at full capacity. Each case is systematically reviewed to determine if the service provided addresses the youth's risks and needs as identified through assessments, the Probation Case Management System (PCMS), Court orders and Conditions of Probation.

**Foster Youth Education Project** – Probation and DCFS are working together to expand the Gloria Molina Foster Youth Education Project. The goal of this initiative is to increase graduation rates by identifying an educational advocate for each foster youth, improving academic performance through the use of educational case plans, data gathering and tutoring services,, and encouraging student retention in the K-12 school system. Probation is using Waiver funds to pilot this program for Probation youth in all Supervisorial Districts (countywide) by contracting with Children, Youth and Family Collaborative (CYFC).

**Group Home Aftercare Services** – Many Group Home agencies have contracts with DMH to provide clinical services for Probation youth placed in their residential treatment programs. Probation has worked with DMH to expand the contracts of five (5) Group Home agencies to provide coordinated case management aftercare services to youth returning home from care. These services which may include individual and family therapy provide greater continuity of

care and ensure linkages are made once the youth transitions home. This strategy will improve permanency resulting in a decrease of reentries into out-of-home care.

**Expansion of Substance Abuse Services** – Probation has developed and finalized a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Department of Public Health Substance Abuse Prevention and Control to use existing contracted agencies to provide community-based substance abuse services to youth identified with substance abuse risk factors. The availability and utilization of these services will provide judicial officers with community-based alternatives for substance abuse violations resulting in less detentions and out-of-home removals.

**Youth Development Services (YDS)/ Life Skills** - Chaffee/Foster Care Independence Act funds (Federal and State dollars) are used to fund YDS transition age youth between ages 16 and 21. Probation has used Waiver funds to redirect an equal amount of Chafee funds for the YDS Individualized Transition Skills Program contract. This will afford funds to provide Independent Living Program (ILP) supportive services to the age 16-21 eligible Transition Age Youth (TAY) population and support each youth's self-sufficiency plans by providing direct funds for housing assistance, employment, job training, clothes, transportation and education assistance. Probation has finalized an MOU with Community Senior Services (CSS) to provide full-time employment opportunities for at least 100-125 Probation TAY youth. This will assist youth with successful transition back into the community by obtaining employment.

**Expansion of Placement Permanency & Quality Assurance Group Home Monitoring Unit** – Probation has increased the Placement Permanency Quality Assurance Unit (PPQA) Group Home Monitors from four (4) DPOs to six (6). The Group Home Monitors are required to conduct compliance reviews on 24 agencies at 59 different sites. The Group Home Monitors also investigate any allegation of non-compliance to the County contract as well as any allegation of maltreatment or child endangerment occurring at any of the Group Homes. Given the volume of high-priority responsibilities, Probation expanded this unit and also added four Program Analysts. This will ensure that allegations of maltreatment are investigated in a timelier manner and that our youth are placed in safer, more stable care.

**241.1 WIC Dual Supervision Countywide Expansion** – Probation, in collaboration with the Superior Court (Juvenile Presiding Judge), DCFS, DMH and other stakeholders, are implementing the enhanced Dual Status Project as part of the Crossover Youth Initiative. This initiative has expanded countywide, significantly increasing current caseloads for DPOs and CSWs. This project includes pre- and post-adjudication Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meetings involving youth, their parents/guardians, partner agencies and other community-based organizations. The MDT involves enhanced assessment and enhanced cross systems case

management. Probation has used flexible Title IV-E funds to expand this unit by 10 DPOs and 1 SDPO.

### **III. Successes:**

During the five-year Waiver period, Probation focused most of its efforts on the creation of aftercare services. Probation sought to decrease the length of stay in out-of-home care in favor of in-home aftercare services, which resulted in a significant reduction of youth in out-of-home care. Probation has seen a 47% decrease in the total number youth in out-of home care since the beginning of the Waiver. Average length of stay in Probation's foster care has decreased during the Waiver period by 72 days or approximately 20% compared to the baseline period.